Expected Outcomes: Maximize mastery of theory and clinical skills

Students in the Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) Master's degree option will be professionally competent marriage and family therapists when they depart the program.

Assessment methods

Method: Clinical Data Collection

All clients at the AU MFT Center complete a set of assessments before their first session and before every subsequent 4th session (1st, 4th, eighth, etc.). In addition to assessing their progress toward their therapeutic goals, these surveys included a measure of the quality of the therapeutic alliance that emerged between the client and therapist during the course of therapy. MFT research emphasize the importance of this alliance to positive therapy outcomes. Finding are based on the latest observation from each client.

Findings:

From 2006 through 2011, 86.6% of 440 clients completing the therapeutic alliance questions reported developing a strong therapeutic alliance with their therapists. Year-to-year percentages indicated a low of 79.1% and a high of 90.9% reporting a strong therapeutic alliance with their therapist. Also, from 2006 to 2011, 89.4% of 518 clients reported being moderately to highly satisfied with the progress they had made toward their therapeutic goals. Year-to-year percentages indicated a low of 77.8% satisfaction and a high of 97.1% satisfaction with progress.

How did you use findings for improvement?

These findings suggest that AU MFT student therapists develop strong relationships with their clients and make progress toward their therapeutic goals, two important indicators of effective therapy. Based on these findings no programmatic changes appear warranted.

Additional comments:

Future surveys might attempt to assess the perspectives of therapy clients who terminate treatment early. This sub-sample of clients may be less satisfied with these areas and their views could help produce suggestions for improvement.